

Message Text

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FM AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0979

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

C O N F I D E N T I A L PONTA DELGADA 0090

E.O. 11562: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PO

SUBJECT: AZORES INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT

1. WE EXPECT PUBLICATION SOON OF MANIFESTO DEMANDING SELF DETERMINATION FOR AZORES. GROUP BEHIND MANIFESTO STILL SMALL AND NOT WELL ORGANIZED BUT THEY EXPECT AND WE BELIEVE THEY CAN GET WIDESPREAD SUPPORT AMONG LOCAL POPULACE.

2. CONSULATE HAS BEEN APPROACHED BY NUNOVAS COCABARALDA CAMARA, RETIRED AGRONOMIST AND MEMBER OF ONE OF SAO MIGUEL'S OLDEST AND RUCHEST FAMILIES, TO OBTAIN US SUPPORT FOR INDEPENDENCE. HE CITES AS REASON FOR INDEPENDENCE LONG STANDING NEGLECT OF AZORES BY LISBON AND PROFOUND DOUBT THAT NEW PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT, OCCUPIED WITH AFRICA AND CONTINENTAL AFFAIRS AND CONSISTING OF A MULTIPLICITY OF POLITICAL PARTIES NONE OF WHICH INTERESTS COINCIDE WITH SPECIALIZED INTERESTS OF ISLANDERS, WILL PAY MORE ATTANTION TO AZORES THAN DID OLD ONE. HE FORESEES INDEPENDENT AZORES ECONOMY RESTING ON RENTS FROM LAJES AND FRENCH BASE ON FLORES, FREE PORTS, CASINOS, AND DEVELOPMENT OF GEO THERMAL ENERGY, CATTLE AND FISHING INDUSTRIES.

3. FOLLOWING PUBLICATION MANIFESTO, GROUP EXPECTS ORGANIZE PUBLIC MEETINGS SAO MIGUEL AND SEND EMISSARIES TO DRUM-UP SUPPORT ON OTHER ISLANDS. PLANS UNDERWAY FOR INTERNAL TAKEOVER
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DAILY NEWS PAPER "ACORES" THROUGH CHANGE OF DIRECTORS BY

STAFF ACTION. CAMARA HIMSELF PLANS TRAVEL TO US VERY SOON TO OBTAIN SUPPORT AND MONEY FROM AZOREAN-AMERICANS IN NEW ENGLAND. AMONG OTHERS HE WILL TALK WITH EDMUND DINIZ, NEWBEDFORD POLITICIAN. WE BELIEVE THAT IDEA OF INDEPENDENT AZORES WILL BE ENTHUSIASTICALLY RECEIVED AMONG AZOREANS IN US AND THAT SUBSTANTIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO CAUSE ARE LIKELY.

4. I TOLD CAMARA THAT IF US WERE FACED WITH INDEPENDENT AZORES IT MIGHT CONCEIVABLY BE WILLING PROVIDE SOME SUPPORT BUT THAT THERE WAS VERY LITTLE POSSIBILITY THAT US WOULD ASSIST IN SEPERATION AZORES FROM PORTUGAL, WHICH IS FRIENDLY COUNTRY AND WHOSE NEW GOVERNMENT MORE OVER ENJOYS POPULARITY IN US. HE REPLIED THAT HIS GROUP NEEDS HELP NOW, NOT AFTER INDEPENDENCE HAS BEEN ACHIEVED, AND SPECIFICALLY FINANCIAL AID.

5. CAMARA PROFESSED TO BE A SOCIALIST AND WE KNOW OF OTHER PROPONENTS OF INDEPENDENCE WHO ARE DEMOCRATICALLY INCLINED. WE BELIEVE HOWEVER THAT CONSERVATIVE ELEMENTS HERE WILL ALSO SUPPORT INDEPENDENCE IN THE BELIEF THAT CONTINENTAL PORTUGAL MAY SOON GO COMMUNIST. MAIN OBSTACLES TO INDEPENDENCE ARE DIFFERENCES AMONG NATIVES OF DIFFERENT ISLANDS AND POLITICAL INERTIA OF AZOREANS IN GENERAL. IF DEFFERENCES CAN BE OVERCOME AND IF LOCAL AUTHORITIES REPRESENTING CENTRAL GOVERNMENT ALLOW MOMENTUM TO BUILDUP, INDEPENDENCE IS VERY REAL POSSIBILITY. AS OF VERY RECENTLY MILITARY GOVERNOR UNAWARE OF EXISTENCE INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT.

6. CAMARA WISHES TO TALK TO DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL WHILE IN US. DEPARTMENT REQUESTED ADVISE WHETHER IT WISHES RECEIVE HIM. EMBASSY MAY WISH TALK WITH JOAOBOS COMOTA AMARAL WHO CAMARA CLAIMS IS FAVORABLE TO IDEA OF INDEPENDENCE THOUGH HE HAS GIVEN NO COMMITMENT. DANIEL

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